Protect Victoria’s Forests: Great Forest National Park worth fighting for

Dr Chris Taylor
Research Fellow, Australian National University

Sarah Rees
Conservationist, Co-founder Great Forest National Park

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Conservationist, Co-founder, Great Forest National Park Initiative
Victoria’s Forests
A summary of concerns
“There is no pathway to the race to zero without an effort to restore nature,”

And if it wasn’t already clear to us all, the pandemic has shown just how important nature is to our lives, and why we need to do everything we can to protect and nurture the natural world around us.

- Lord Zac Goldsmith, UK Conservative Minister for the Environment.
What is the Victorian Government doing for the forests?

- In 2018, established an Office of Conservation Regulation to oversee logging - no penalty has ever been awarded to VicForests

- Currently undertaking reviews of all instruments guiding logging ie. Code, Major Event Review of RFA, new Bill on Forest Enforcement and Compliance;

  “minimise the risk to short-term supply obligations arising from third-party litigation” (Min. Symes, JULY 27, 2020)

- Protecting 96,000 hectares by 2030
  - Establishing a long-term plan to protect old-growth forest in East Gippsland using a tool designed (in part) by VicForests and only achieved in totality by 2030.
  - End all native logging by 2030 - not enshrined anywhere in legislation and at high risk of being reversed by industry and Coalition.
  - Announced Immediate Protection Areas - largely protecting unloggable areas. There was no stakeholder input, it a reserve system was internally decided by Government, VicForests and DELWP.

This process then resulted in unlocking 750 hectares of prime habitat for Leadbeater's Possum (greater than 65% likelihood of occurring), VicForests are paid out for any possums they find when logging it.
Cement Creek - Armstrong water catchment

Legend
- Immediate Protection Area
- Clearfell Logging 1970-2018
- Approved April 2019 TRP

Forest Management Zone
Category
- Code of Forest Practice Exclusion
- Conservation Reserve
- General Management Zone
- Historic Reserve
- Other Parks
- Special Reserve
- Special Management Zone
- Special Protection Zone
- Private Land/Other
What is the Victorian Government doing for the industry?

- For multi-national paper company Nippon Paper:
  - $110M in new trees
  - $200M in a transition payment (March, 2020)
  - $5M in feasibility funding for an incinerator

- $60M to buy 49% of Heyfield ASH mill. Last sale price for 100% of the shares (2012) was $28M with a yard full of wood.

- $125M to fund Victorian Forestry Plan - 2030 exit.

- TOTAL: >$500M for logging industry

- Cost associated with reviews and changing regulations and laws to access more forest not currently available under existing regulation.

- Ongoing externalities: funding all pre-logging surveys, roads, water usage and loss, free trees, the policing and fire management (DELWP), consultants for assessments and the direct subsidies to VicForests- TOTAL: unknown

- Continued logging in our water supply until 2030

- Parliamentary Budget Office (PBO) review found ending logging today would also save taxpayers $192M per year.
Who did it better?

Tasmania Agreement provided an $276M for the **immediate protection** of 430,000 hectares of high conservation value forest

Victoria Agreement provided $500M or half a billion to industry today for just 96,000 hectares not fully protected for a decade
“It has been calculated for example that over half the world’s total GDP depends on nature – and that the annual cost of its destruction will reach $10 trillion.

Theme 1: Protecting biodiversity
Conserve at least 30% of the Earth’s surface by 2030 (40). This is viewed as a milestone toward the larger end goal of half of the planet protected by 2050, if not sooner, made elsewhere (16).

https://advances.sciencemag.org/content/5/4/eaaw2869
## The Great Forest National Park

**PROPOSED NEW PARKS**

**EXISTING PARKS**

### Projects & Economic Impact

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Projects</th>
<th>Establishment Cost Estimates</th>
<th>Added Annual Economic Benefit</th>
<th>Added Jobs</th>
<th>Added Annual Visitors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Establish national park, boundaries and management board, and conservation management</td>
<td>$8.1 million</td>
<td>$7.5 million</td>
<td>80 new jobs</td>
<td>24,000 extra</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improved facilities and visitor management, establish Healesville-to-Eildon hiking trail</td>
<td>$17.9 million</td>
<td>$31.1 million</td>
<td>440 new jobs</td>
<td>218,000 extra</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tree-top walk, zip-line and eco-lodge</td>
<td>$19.2 million</td>
<td>$22.5 million</td>
<td>240 new jobs</td>
<td>137,000 extra</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>$45.2 million</strong></td>
<td><strong>$71.1 million</strong></td>
<td><strong>760 new jobs</strong></td>
<td><strong>379,000 extra</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Great Forest National Park would be a boon for the region. Investment in nature tourism is the next big thing for growing centres such as Healesville and Warburton, and will invigorate smaller towns such as Toolangi, Noojee and Rawson.
The Book

Statement of Sovereignty
Introduction: The Central Highlands
Landscapes
Geology
Rainforest
Mountain Ash and other forests
The understorey and forest floor
Water
Fire
Wildlife
Logging
The future

The rare beauty of the Victorian Central Highlands.
A tribute to an extraordinary landscape now under severe threat.
Statement of Sovereignty

In October 2019, First Nations people came together to call on the Victorian Government to acknowledge our sovereignty over the forests and landscapes of the Central Highlands region. We called for an end to the destruction of these lands. The government has never sought, nor have we given, permission to log our forests. These places are homes to our totems, our ancestors and our people. Our cultural obligation is to care for country, land and water. It is time for the Traditional Owners to be given a place at the table in decision-making about the forests, the landscapes and the water that is our country.

Lidia Thorpe, the first Aboriginal senator for Victoria, on behalf of the Elders and Traditional Owners of Gunnai, Taungurung and Wurundjeri Countries of eastern Victoria
In November 2019, Minister Lily D’Ambrosio and Premier Andrews announced an end to native forest logging in 2030 and it was estimated that this would be equal to removing 730,000 cars off the road each year.

...will reduce the amount of carbon in the atmosphere by 1.71 million tonnes of carbon-dioxide-equivalent each year for 25 years – the equivalent of taking 730,000 cars off the road annually.

In May 2021, The State Government announced Victoria’s Climate Change Strategy with forests featuring under the 5 point plan.

3: Revitalising and protecting forests
More than 8% of Victoria is allocated for logging - 1.8 million hectares, ending logging now takes earnest steps in addressing climate change and its associated impacts on critical natural systems.

In light of the IPCC report, we do not have the luxury of choice anymore.
What should Government be doing for the forests?

Exit ALL industrial native forest logging by 2024 as the first step of the 2030 exit plan.
Do not change the Code to allow for greater access.
Flip the market away from destruction into sustainability ie. repeal or meaningfully amend the Wood Pulp Agreement Act 1996.
Retain a greater proportion of plantation timber (grown here) for domestic processing - increase Aussie jobs.

Make nature central to all climate policy and considerations

What you can do:
Sign up to the GFNP newsletter
Major Event Review Submission - VNPA
Ensure all your timber and paper products are certified to the FSC
Support the creation of the GFNP with (co)management by First Nations people.
Support the Global Deal for Forests of 30% land and ocean protected by 2030 as a minimum

Support community groups taking action
THE GREAT FOREST

The exquisite photographs reveal the mountain ash forests of central Victoria to be one of Australia's great natural treasures.

The rare beauty of the Victorian Central Highlands. A tribute to an extraordinary landscape now under severe threat.

‘With its glorious photographs, The Great Forest shows why these forests must be preserved for future generations.’

Tim Flannery

‘This wonderful new book highlights the magnificent wet forests of Victoria, and why it is so critical to protect them for their biodiversity, their beauty, and for all of humanity.’

Dame Jane Goodall

‘It's rare to read a book that fills your heart with joy and your eyes with tears, all at the same time. The Great Forest does just this.’

Sophie Cunningham

Scan me to pre order now
Protect Victoria’s Forests:
Great Forest National Park
worth fighting for

- 400,000 extra annual visitors
- 750 extra jobs
- $70m/yr to the local economy

Visit www.greatforestanationalpark.com.au
We use thermal and infrared video technology to search for threatened species in forest earmarked for logging, in order to have the area protected. In this way, WOTCH has managed to protect over 1500 ha from logging since it was established in 2014.

twitter: @WOTCHInc

support September Supreme Court Action with @EJ_Aus
Friends of Leadbeaters
www.leadbeaters.org.au
twitter: @LeadbeatersPoss

- Advocacy
- Legal action
- Conservation
- Field trips
Learn about Boroondara’s Climate Action Plan
SUPPORT BOROONDARA’S CLIMATE FUTURE

Cr Garry Thompson
Mayor, City of Boroondara
Cr Wes Gault
Mathew Dixon
Coordinator Environmental Sustainability

Wed, September 29 + online 7.30pm - 9.00pm
RSVP: www.lighterfootprints.org/event/climate-action-plan/
Going it alone!
WHAT STATES CAN DO FOR CLIMATE ACTION

Minister for Energy, Environment and Climate Change

The Hon. Lily D’Ambrosio

in conversation with
Simon Holmes à Court
Senior Advisor, Melbourne Climate & Energy College, Melbourne University

moderated by
Victoria McKenzie-Mcharg
Strategic Director, Women’s Environmental Leadership Australia

Wed, October 20 7.30pm - 9.00pm
Online  Register: www.lighterfootprints.org/event/victorian-climate-action/
Protecting Victorian Forests

Thank you to our online audience

Facebook Live of tonight’s session

Follow up email to RSVP’s with next steps

- Follow us on Twitter: @LiteFootprints
- Lighter Footprints Facebook: /LighterFootprintsMelbourne
CLIMATE TARGETS CAMPAIGN
Climate survey: calling, flyers, lobbying, electoral support
Less than 10 weeks to COP 26 in Glasgow

EMISSIONS REDUCTION TARGETS 2030

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Target</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>United Kingdom</td>
<td>63%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United States</td>
<td>50-52%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>States/Territories</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australia</td>
<td>26-28%</td>
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WILL SCOTT MORRISON MATCH BORIS & BIDEN?